

Entrepreneurs want to challenge these big tech companies. Unfortunately, the system is rigged against the little-guy startup. These companies can remove your website from the internet, delete your app from the app store, and permanently ban you from their platforms. These companies can also remove competitors or those they disagree with, largely with no recourse.

Millions of small business owners use tech platforms to operate their business. It has been a big boost to our economy over the last 25 years. Many business owners have been censored, banned, and demonetized. This can be done without warning, no explanation whatsoever, and many times without any meaningful due process.

Our antitrust regulators need to take a harder look at the actions of Big Tech. I recently introduced legislation with Senator KLOBUCHAR to increase resources for FTC and DOJ antitrust enforcement. This legislation would provide an immediate boost to these Agencies' effective competition responsibilities.

Right now, there are essentially five companies within just the United States that determine what can and cannot be viewed by the American public. It is becoming increasingly clear that these companies are more beholden to cancel culture and not to the free speech principles that this country was founded upon.

When I talk about what these Agencies—the FTC and the DOJ—ought to be doing, I am not excluding anything that this Congress ought to be doing beyond what these Agencies have a responsibility to do.

So I go back to a famous quote by Justice Brandeis:

If there be time to expose through discussion the falsehoods and fallacies, to avert the evil by the processes of education, the remedy to be applied is more speech, not enforced silence.

It is time that we examine the need for section 230 immunity—that is beyond what we expect the DOJ and FTC to do—examine the need for section 230 immunity and to what extent these tech companies are abusing their monopoly power. It is time that these companies stop arbitrarily deciding what speech is acceptable for our country and the 335 million Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I am grateful for the opportunity, as I am sure we all were, to be back home for the last 2 weeks for the State work period and to talk to our constituents. Some of my conversations—and I suspect I am not alone—some of these conversations were virtual. But most of us are glad to get back to whatever the next normal is and have more and more human interaction rather than the isolation and, frankly, some of the anxiety that comes along with being kept apart. We are social animals, we

human beings, and we thrive on and we, I believe, need that kind of interaction. But so far this year, most of it has been virtual.

I did have a chance to speak to the Texas Hispanic Chamber members and the members of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber as part of their annual legislative summit. Like many of the folks who do fly-ins at least once a year, we have had to forgo that, so this was a virtual meeting. But I did get a chance to hear from many of the members and particularly their board members on the importance of our response to the pandemic and the progress they have in turn been able to make through things like the Paycheck Protection Program.

I also was able to join friends from Webb County—that is Laredo, TX—the North American Development Bank and their private partners, to announce a \$216 million investment in a new solar farm, which they are very excited about.

I was glad to be able to visit with a number of Texans in person, with all of the appropriate safety precautions we have all learned so well.

I was able to kick off National Volunteer Month at the San Antonio Food Bank with a number of incredible nonprofits and people with big hearts who are volunteering even amidst the—hopefully the waning days of this pandemic, at the food bank. I hope Texans and folks all across the country will continue to find ways to support one another by volunteering with local nonprofits this month and into the future.

I also was able to meet with venue owners and operators at Antone's in Austin, which is the live music capital of the world, on the day before applications opened for the U.S. Small Business Administration shuttered venue operators grant. This grant program was established through the Save Our Stages Act, which Senator KLOBUCHAR and I introduced and which was signed into law as part of the December relief bill. These small venues were excluded from the Paycheck Protection Program and, of course, were among the first to close and will be among the last to open. But what we did in the Save Our Stages Act will go a long way to ensure that the marquees at our most beloved live entertainment venues can shine bright once again, and I am eager for the funds to reach Texas venues.

Then, in Dallas, I joined my friend Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON to announce bipartisan legislation we are introducing in response to the deadly winter storm that hit Texas last February. This legislation will help build resilience in our electrical infrastructure throughout the country and will help ensure we are better prepared for whatever extreme weather Mother Nature sends our way.

It was great, as I said, to visit with folks in person again, and I am glad to see a gradual return to our new normal, as more and more Americans are vaccinated.

Even though the issues I was discussing throughout my State were different, one common theme that I brought up everywhere I went was to continue to encourage Texans to get vaccinated. So far, 9 million of us have received at least 1 dose of the vaccine, and 5.6 million Texans are fully vaccinated. Obviously we are not out of the woods yet, but Americans have every reason to be optimistic about the headway made in the fight against COVID-19.

BORDER SECURITY

Unfortunately, just as we are seeing progress on the pandemic, we are seeing another crisis on our border.

In February, Customs and Border Protection encountered more than 100,000 migrants along our southern border—the highest total since 2006. Last month, things continued to trend in the wrong direction. CBP encountered more than 172,000 migrants along our border, which is the highest in two decades.

Put simply, our immigration system cannot accommodate this many migrants coming at one time. We lack the personnel, the facilities, the resources, and the policies to efficiently process these migrants to make sure those with valid claims, say, for asylum are protected and to provide quality care to all of those in our custody in the meantime. That is true for adults and family units but especially for the alarming number of unaccompanied children.

In the summer of 2014, we saw a similar spike of children arriving at our border, which President Obama called a “humanitarian crisis.” It absolutely was. Between October 2013 and September 2014, more than 68,500 unaccompanied children entered the United States. We are only halfway through fiscal year 2021 and are already reaching that total, with more than 48,500 migrant children having crossed our border just in the last 6 months. Nearly 19,000 of these children came last month alone, the highest monthly total on record. Putting that in perspective, almost 19,000 children in 1 month is roughly enough to fill every seat in the AT&T Center in San Antonio, where the San Antonio Spurs play.

There are grave, cascading consequences to this flow of humanity coming across our border. It obviously impacts these children as well as the communities and organizations that care for them. And, of course, the criminal organizations that smuggle people into the country, along with illicit drugs, are getting richer in the process.

Over the last several weeks, I have spent time in these communities that are managing this crisis to learn more about the challenges they face. Last month, my friend HENRY CUELLAR, a Congressman from Laredo, TX, and I visited the Carrizo Springs Influx Care Facility, which is one of the shelters that house young boys aged 13 through 17. We heard from the men and women

who run the shelter, as well as stakeholders in Laredo, elected officials, and other NGO representatives. We heard from them about the mounting challenges of this crisis.

I visited three additional facilities in Midland, Dallas, and Houston during this last work period, and I saw the incredible ways that these communities and the nongovernmental associations are caring for migrant children.

Let me just say, we all recognize our obligation to treat these children and these migrants humanely while they are here in our country, but we also need to make sure that our laws are equally enforced on a fair basis and that people who come this way don't jump ahead of people who have been waiting patiently in line to come into the United States through legal means.

Just before the State work period started, Senator CRUZ and I hosted 17 of our fellow Republican colleagues in the Senate down at the Rio Grande Valley. I was pleased when I heard from my friend HENRY CUELLAR that he had hosted JOE MANCHIN, the Senator from West Virginia, and JOHN HICKENLOOPER, the Senator from Colorado. I am glad that Members of both parties are coming down to learn for themselves and to listen to the experts I depend on to give me good information.

We saw the facility in Donna and learned about the challenges created by such a high volume of unaccompanied children. For folks who don't live in a border State or haven't spent much time in our border communities, it is important to see the situation firsthand and to learn from those experts whom I mentioned a moment ago.

I have worked with folks in the Rio Grande Valley throughout my time in the Senate to ensure that these communities are safe, prosperous, and vibrant places to live. These men and women have valuable insight for all of us into the policies that have led to this crisis and the ones we need to put in place to turn things around. I appreciate these experts who spent time sharing their feedback with all of us who have been interested enough to travel to the border and the colleagues who visited there. I am glad our colleagues were able to see and learn more about the unique challenges facing these communities and our Nation when it comes to uncontrolled, overwhelming masses of humanity.

To read news stories about the thousands of children who are brought to the United States alone is heart-breaking. To see their faces, though, and learn more about the devastating circumstances in which they were brought here is also nothing short of heartbreaking.

At the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Dallas, which is now serving as a shelter for 2,300 young boys, I heard from one young boy who arrived in the United States after a 3-month trek from Central America on foot. He told us that he spent time hid-

ing in jungles along the way and that food was scarce through much of their journey. As you could imagine, he was happy to be at a safe shelter receiving three square meals a day. He was understandably soft-spoken about his long and treacherous journey, and I am sure he experienced hardships that you and I could hardly imagine—certainly circumstances we would never want our children or grandchildren to experience.

Last week, some truly disturbing allegations came out about abuse in one of the temporary facilities in San Antonio. As I said, these children have arrived in our country after a perilous journey. Many arrive sick, malnourished, and having endured abuse, including assault, along the way. The fact that any of these forms of abuse could continue while under the care of the U.S. Government is despicable. I have called on the inspector general of Health and Human Services to fully investigate these allegations of sexual assault in this facility at the Freeman Coliseum. I hope the administration will support our efforts to get to the bottom of what happened and ensure that no child is ever subjected to any level of mistreatment while in our care.

The real kicker in all of this is that as all of this is unfolding, the coyotes, the smugglers, and the cartels that bring these children to our border are getting richer and richer and richer. Border Patrol said it is common for families to pay thousands of dollars to the coyotes to bring children to America. With nearly 19,000 caught last month alone, it is easy to see how profitable this business is.

Let's say the cartels charge \$5,000 a head—a low estimate based on some of the figures I have seen. That would mean these criminals brought in nearly \$100 million in revenue in March alone just from smuggling children. These cartels—these transnational criminal organizations—tactics include dropping children as young as 3 years old over the top of a 14-foot segment of the border wall or allowing a 6-month-old child to be thrown from a raft into the Rio Grande River to divert Border Patrol while they attempt a rescue so they can get on their way.

This has to stop. We can get into an argument about who is to blame, but that doesn't change the more important matter about who has the power to stop it.

First, President Biden needs to acknowledge the scope of this crisis and commit to addressing it along with us in the Congress. All we have gotten from the White House so far are statements telling migrants now is not the time to come, as if they would let everyone know when the time to come is appropriate.

Two weeks ago, President Biden tasked Vice President Harris to lead efforts to address this crisis, and I thought this was a sign that the administration was finally ready to take

some informed action. But the Vice President has not made a single trip to the border yet, and there is not even one on the horizon. Then she seemed to walk back—that, no, her assignment wasn't at the border; it was to engage in diplomacy with countries in Central America.

Simple statements urging people not to come are meaningless when all of the policies represent a flashing green light. That is especially true when Central Americans hear messages from their family and friends who have made it to America that the door is wide open and they will be let in.

The administration must take action and implement policies that discourage parents from sending their children on this perilous and dangerous journey in the hands of human smugglers and criminals into the United States.

We have a big role to play too. Immigration reform has been one of my greatest frustrations throughout my time here. Previous attempts to make lasting changes led to bills that were so big that they crumbled under their own weight. I hope we can all agree that this is not the time to repeat that history. We need to take action to address the crisis at hand now, without extraneous matters that could be and should be changes made down the line. I am working with some of my Democratic colleagues to achieve this end, and I am eager to share more details soon.

Republicans and Democrats must work together to address this crisis and to bring order out of chaos and to protect the innocent children who are being harmed.

Legal immigration has been one of the cornerstones of our great country throughout our history. Legal immigration is generous, it is safe, it is orderly, and it is fair. Illegal immigration and the horrors that it brings along with it, some of which we learned about on our recent trips to the border, are not humane. They dishonor the willingness of the people who want to come to the country legally, who wait patiently in line, by jumping ahead of them in line. But, as I said, the cartels and human smugglers know our laws and our vulnerabilities better than we do, and they are exploiting it each and every day. We have to bring it to an end.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I am here on the floor of the Senate this evening to talk about our shared national priorities for addressing the Nation's infrastructure needs and my concerns—really deep concerns—about the plan the Biden administration has outlined and specifically the way they intend to pay for it.

I don't think there is a single Member in this Chamber who does not recognize the need for us to invest in upgrading America's aging infrastructure. Our network of roads, bridges,